



**EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE
NORTHEAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

Project Number: 3030253

Address: 4600 Union Bay Place East

Applicant: Maria Barrientos, Barrientos, LLC

Date of Meeting: Monday, March 26, 2018

Board Members Present: James Marria (chair)
Eric Blank
Ivana Begley (substitute)

Board Members Absent: Brian Bishop
Anita Jerrage

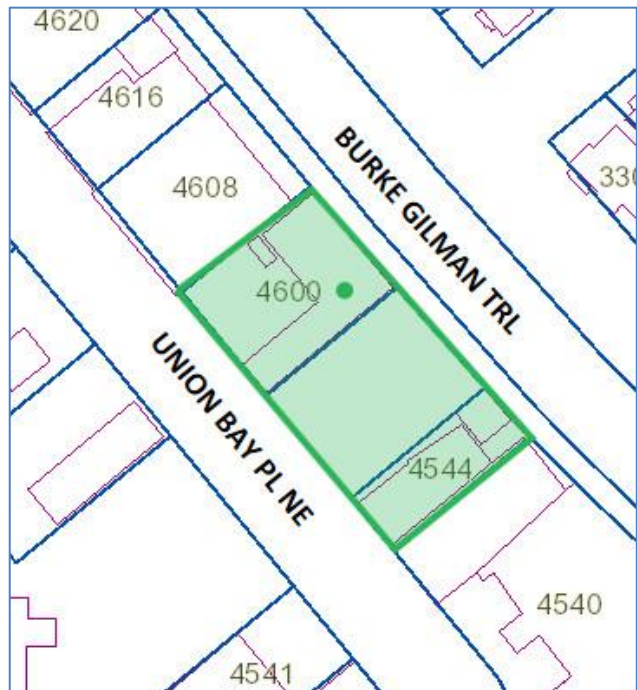
SDCI Staff Present: Carly Guillory, Senior Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Commercial 2 with a 40-foot height limit (C2-40)

Nearby Zones: (North) C2-40
(South) C2-40
(East) Single-Family with a 5,000-square foot minimum lot size (SF5000)
(West) C2-65

Lot Area: 20,300-square feet



Current Development:

The site consists of a one-story concrete structure and surface parking lot. The site slopes up generally from Union Bay Pl E to the alley at the rear. The Burke Gilman Trail and single-family neighborhood beyond are approximately 20-feet above the site.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

Surrounding development along Union Bay Pl E consists of a range of uses and development including warehouses, surface parking lots, swaths of large curb cuts and under-developed sidewalk conditions, and new mixed-use development with retail at grade. Swedish Primary Care, Safeway, and the University Village are examples of uses in proximity of the site. The height of development ranges generally from two- to six-stories. To the east of the site up the hill can be found an unimproved alley, Burke Gilman Trail, and a single-family residential neighborhood beyond.

Access:

Vehicular access from the site is proposed via Union Bay Pl E.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

Steep slope and historic landfill

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Design Review Early Design Guidance for a 6-story, 98-unit apartment building with general retail sales and service. Parking for 42 vehicles proposed. Existing buildings to be demolished. Project relies on a contract rezone.

The design packet includes information presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number at this website:

<http://www.seattle.gov/DPD/aboutus/news/events/DesignReview/SearchPastReviews/default.aspx>

The packet is also available to view in the file, by contacting the Public Resource Center at SDCl:

Mailing Public Resource Center

Address: 700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following public comments were offered at this meeting:

- Concerned the project will impact views to Lake Washington from the Burke Gilman trail and single-family neighborhood beyond.
- Noted that a section of city design guidelines addresses protecting views of Mt Rainier and Lake Washington from the Burke Gilman Trail [SDCI NOTE: The following University District Neighborhood Design Guideline references views as they relate to the Burke Gilman Trail: CS2-I *Responding to Site Characteristics*. This site is outside the boundaries of the University District Neighborhood Design Guidelines area; therefore, these guidelines do not apply to this site.]
- Recommended consideration of options that include a view through the site.
- Supported new housing and the project in general.
- Concerned that Union Bay PI NE is improved with a patchwork of sidewalk improvements. Questioned how the retail space will be accessible to public without a continuous improved sidewalk beyond the project site.
- Questioned where retail users will park.
- Described existing sidewalk conditions in the area, noting specific areas without sidewalks.
- Concerned about “tunnel effect” of all the other current and future developments along Union Bay PI NE.
- Concerned that future retail pedestrian volumes will impede sidewalk pedestrian traffic.
- Recommended sidewalk improvements for the length of Union Bay PI NE.
- Concerned that the project height will impact views of Lake Washington and University Village from the single-family neighborhood to the east.
- Recommended consideration of how the east facing façade will impact privacy of the single-family homes to the east.
- Recommended that pedestrian level landscaping take cues from Tremezzo Condos (5000 30th Ave NE) and provide an inviting and pedestrian scale condition. Blakeley Commons was described as not desirable for pedestrians.
- Appreciated the bend and setback at Union Bay PI NE to create a public space at grade.
- Suggested the ground level provide inviting public amenities such as a shaded bench.
- The Ravenna Bryant Community Association acknowledged and appreciated the community outreach efforts from the applicant. The council generally supported the additional workforce housing in the neighborhood, the right-of-way improvements, and recommended the Burke Gilman Trail be more connected to the neighborhood via adjacent private properties.
- Supported the bend and setback at Union Bay PI NE to create useable retail frontage at grade.
- Concerned new street trees will conflict with overhead powerlines.

One purpose of the design review process is for the Board and City to receive comments from the public that help to identify feedback and concerns about the site and design concept, identify applicable citywide and neighborhood design guidelines of highest priority to the site and explore conceptual design, siting alternatives and eventual architectural design. Concerns

with off-street parking, traffic and construction impacts are reviewed as part of the environmental review conducted by SDCI and are not part of this review. Concerns with building height calculations or bicycle storage standards, for example, are addressed under the City's zoning code and are not part of this review.

All public comments submitted in writing for this project can be viewed using the following link and entering the project number: <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/>.

PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance.

Page references are to the EDG Packet dated March 26, 2018.

1. Massing and Public Realm:

- a. The existing context and historic analyses contained in the Recommendation packet describe the site as an edge condition between the large-scale retail uses such as the University Village to the west and the smaller scale residential development up the hill to the east. The Board appreciated this thoughtful historic analysis and supported the massing of the preferred Option D with its bend at the west façade allowing for a generous at grade area for pedestrians at the retail spaces (pp. 32-37). A similar bend was proposed at the east elevation in response to the Burke Gilman Trail, with vertical bays to break down the east façade and address the smaller scale residential neighborhood to the east (pp. 23). The Board recommended moving forward to submittal of the MUP application with the preferred Option D. (CS3-B *Local History and Culture*)
- b. The proposed ground floor of the preferred Option D included retail at the north end of the frontage, residential lobby at the center, and bicycle room, trash room and garage entry at the south (pp. 27) fronting Union Bay Pl NE. In support of this configuration, the packet included analyses depicting adjacent existing and pending curb cuts (pp. 19), adjacent existing and pending retail access (p. 46), and the proposed bicycle storage room and solid waste (pp. 47). The Board appreciated these analyses, agreeing that Option D offered the most successful ground floor plan response and recommended further development of this Option D ground floor. Pedestrian and vehicle interactions should be carefully considered. (PL3-C *Retail Edges*, DC1-A *Arrangement of Interior Uses*)
- c. The combination of the massing bend in the west elevation and the ground floor plan of the preferred Option D resulted in an extended sidewalk condition ranging in width of six to 12-feet. The Board supported this ground level condition, agreeing with public comment that creating space at the right-of-way was important and will encourage activation and enhance the pedestrian experience. The Board supported the preferred Option D, finding it enhances the public realm along Union Bay Pl NE, and recommended further development of this space to allow for activities such as benches and facilitate pedestrian interaction. Include in the Recommendation packet details illustrating the treatment of this space. (PL3-C *Retail Edges*)

- d. The Board recognized the unique street grid of the neighborhood, noting the diagonal configuration and bend of Union Bay PI NE (pp. 22-23). Due to this configuration, along with the impact of new development with increased heights along this street, the Board discussed the possibility of a tunnel or canyon effect perceivable from the public realm. The perspectives on page 32 begin to illustrate such a concept. The Board expressed concern about a canyon effect condition and agreed the massing bend and additional space at grade in preferred Option D will mitigate this condition (pp. 32-37).
- e. Current development along Union Bay PI NE has resulted in improvements to the right-of-way including new sidewalks. Public comment noted this condition and recommended a solution that would result in a new sidewalk for the entire length of Union Bay PI NE. The Board acknowledged this public comment, agreeing the public realm is an important consideration and that this development will contribute to the overall quality of the public realm and urban fabric of the neighborhood. The Board requested information be presented at the Recommendation meeting illustrating the treatment of the Union Bay PI NE frontage at this site. (PL3-C *Retail Edges*, DC3-B *Open Space Uses and Activities*)
- f. The Board acknowledged public comment expressing concern about impacts to private views from the residential neighborhood as well as views from the Burke Gilman Trail. While sympathetic to these concerns about private views, the Board noted that compliance with the development standards of the zone, such as setbacks, mitigate impacts to some private views. No guidance was provided.

2. Architectural Context:

- a. The Recommendation packet (pages 20-23) contained a historic analysis of the area, outlining how this context, including the rail spur line, lumber mill on Union Bay, and area circulation patterns informed the massing. The Board appreciated this attention to detail and encouraged the project to incorporate these historic references in the architectural concept in subtle and obvious ways. (CS3.B *Local History and Culture*)
- a. The bend in the west elevation was identified as an integral part of the architectural concept, adding an element of interest. The Board recommended attention to detail in the treatment of this bend.
- b. The Board acknowledged public comment expressing concerns about potential privacy impacts to the residential neighborhood to the east. The Board recognized that commonly privacy impacts result from a taller project leering down into residential neighborhoods. However, the Board noted that in this case the potential impacts are lessened by the geography of the area, since the subject site is nearly 30-feet below and 125-feet west of the residential neighborhood. Therefore, the Board observed that the windows on the east elevation were unlikely to significantly impact the privacy of the residential neighborhood to the east. However, to mitigate any potential impacts, the Board recommended careful application of material to obscure direct views into and out of the proposed residential units to the neighborhood to the east. (DC2-B, *Architectural and Facade Composition*)
- c. A roof deck was proposed at the southwest portion of the roof, overlooking Union Bay PI NE. The Board supported this location of this amenity space to take advantage of views and physical connections to exterior spaces and uses, and recommended it be visually linked to the residential entry below and incorporated into the façade

composition. Concepts of light and elements of verticality were suggested. The Board also requested additional details describing the landscape plan. (DC1-A-4 *Views and Connections*, DC2-B *Architectural and Facade Composition*)

- b. The bends at the west and east elevation of preferred Option D were supported by the Board who characterized the bend at the west as resulting in a unified, smooth and calm façade, while the east had a modulation of a finer grain and rougher edge, possibly treated with balconies. The Board recommended that these characters be reinforced through materiality. (DC2-B *Architectural and Facade Composition*)

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board's recommendation on the requested departure(s) will be based on the departure's potential to help the project better meet these design guidelines priorities and achieve a better overall project design than could be achieved without the departure(s). The Board's recommendation will be reserved until the final Board meeting.

At the time of the Early Design Guidance no departures were requested.

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The Citywide and Neighborhood guidelines recognized by the Board as Priority Guidelines are identified above. All guidelines remain applicable and are summarized below. For the full text please visit the Design Review website.

CONTEXT & SITE

CS3 Architectural Context and Character: Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood.

CS3-B Local History and Culture

CS3-B-1. Placemaking: Explore the history of the site and neighborhood as a potential placemaking opportunity. Look for historical and cultural significance, using neighborhood groups and archives as resources.

PUBLIC LIFE

PL3 Street-Level Interaction: Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level with clear connections to building entries and edges.

PL3-C Retail Edges

PL3-C-1. Porous Edge: Engage passersby with opportunities to interact visually with the building interior using glazing and transparency. Create multiple entries where possible and make a physical and visual connection between people on the sidewalk and retail activities in the building.

PL3-C-2. Visibility: Maximize visibility into the building interior and merchandise displays. Consider fully operational glazed wall-sized doors that can be completely opened to the street, increased height in lobbies, and/or special lighting for displays.

PL3-C-3. Ancillary Activities: Allow space for activities such as sidewalk vending, seating, and restaurant dining to occur. Consider setting structures back from the street or incorporating space in the project design into which retail uses can extend.

DESIGN CONCEPT

DC1 Project Uses and Activities: Optimize the arrangement of uses and activities on site.

DC1-A Arrangement of Interior Uses

DC1-A-1. Visibility: Locate uses and services frequently used by the public in visible or prominent areas, such as at entries or along the street front.

DC1-A-2. Gathering Places: Maximize the use of any interior or exterior gathering spaces.

DC1-A-3. Flexibility: Build in flexibility so the building can adapt over time to evolving needs, such as the ability to change residential space to commercial space as needed.

DC1-A-4. Views and Connections: Locate interior uses and activities to take advantage of views and physical connections to exterior spaces and uses.

DC2 Architectural Concept: Develop an architectural concept that will result in a unified and functional design that fits well on the site and within its surroundings.

DC2-B Architectural and Facade Composition

DC2-B-1. Façade Composition: Design all building facades—including alleys and visible roofs— considering the composition and architectural expression of the building as a whole. Ensure that all facades are attractive and well-proportioned.

DC3 Open Space Concept: Integrate open space design with the building design so that they complement each other.

DC3-B Open Space Uses and Activities

DC3-B-1. Meeting User Needs: Plan the size, uses, activities, and features of each open space to meet the needs of expected users, ensuring each space has a purpose and function.

DC3-B-2. Matching Uses to Conditions: Respond to changing environmental conditions such as seasonal and daily light and weather shifts through open space design and/or programming of open space activities.

DC3-B-3. Connections to Other Open Space: Site and design project-related open spaces to connect with, or enhance, the uses and activities of other nearby public open space where appropriate.

DC3-B-4. Multifamily Open Space: Design common and private open spaces in multifamily projects for use by all residents to encourage physical activity and social interaction.

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE meeting, the Board recommended moving forward to MUP application.